

VZCZCXYZ0000  
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHTV #0185/01 0271025  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 271025Z JAN 10  
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5175  
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEAHQA/HQ USAF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEADWD/DA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHMFIUU/CNO WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEHAD/AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI PRIORITY 0206  
RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY 3117  
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY 7192  
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 7382  
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY 6615  
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY 5309  
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 7479  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 4232  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 2457  
RUEHRB/AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY 1109  
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY 8644  
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH PRIORITY 3641  
RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS PRIORITY 7613  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 9716  
RUEHJI/AMCONSUL JEDDAH PRIORITY 2435  
RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY 3613  
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY  
RHMFIUU/COMSIXTHFLT PRIORITY

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 000185

STATE FOR NEA, NEA/IPA, NEA/PPD

WHITE HOUSE FOR PRESS OFFICE, SIT ROOM  
NSC FOR NEA STAFF

SECDEF WASHDC FOR USDP/ASD-PA/ASD-ISA  
HQ USAF FOR XOX  
DA WASHDC FOR SASA  
JOINT STAFF WASHDC FOR PA  
CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL FOR POLAD/USIA ADVISOR  
COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE FOR PAO/POLAD  
COMSIXTHFLT FOR 019

JERUSALEM ALSO ICD  
LONDON ALSO FOR HKANONA AND POL  
PARIS ALSO FOR POL  
ROME FOR MFO

SIPDIS  
E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: ISRAEL MEDIA REACTION

-----  
SUBJECTS COVERED IN THIS REPORT:  
-----

Mideast

-----  
Key stories in the media:  
-----

The main Hebrew language newspapers highlighted today's events marking International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Shimon Peres are both scheduled to speak in Europe today at ceremonies marking the Remembrance Day: Netanyahu at the Auschwitz death camp and Peres at the Bundestag in

Berlin. Netanyahu visited Warsaw yesterday and met with the Polish prime minister and foreign minister. He is expected to speak today about the lesson that should be learned from the Holocaust in the context of Iran's attempts to obtain nuclear weapons. Leading newspapers provided several quotes from Netanyahu's planned speech, in which he will say that "Iran is the greatest threat to the Jewish People since the Holocaust." Ahead of today's ceremonies in Berlin, President Peres met yesterday with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and thanked her for her firm position on Iran. According to most media outlets, Merkel said that steps would be taken to tighten the sanctions against Iran starting from next month.

On its front page, Yediot focused on the arrest of Rabbi Yitzhak Shapira, dean of the Od Yosef Hai Yeshiva in Yitzhar. Rabbi Shapira was questioned in the context of the torching of the mosque at Yasouf, near Nablus, in December 2009, and arrested after refusing to cooperate with his questioning by the police and Shin Bet. This follows the recent arrest of several young people from Yitzhar, who are still under detention. Local Yitzhar residents and MK Michael Ben-Ari (National Union) criticized the rabbi's arrest.

Major media reported that the Knesset House Committee voted yesterday to strip MK Said Nafa (Balad) of his immunity, so that he could stand trial for traveling to Syria in 2007 and allegedly meeting with a foreign agent. In the committee's discussion, Attorney General Meni Mazuz explained that unlike previous cases, in which Arab MKs were not prosecuted after traveling to enemy states, Nafa had also committed a security offense by engaging in contact with a foreign agent.

Block Quotes:

-----

-----

Mideast:

-----

#### I. "At the mouth of the volcano"

Diplomatic correspondent and editorial page editor Aluf Benn wrote in the independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz (1/27): "There is deep concern surrounding U.S. President Obama's announcement that his effort to restart the Israeli-Palestinian peace process has failed. ... This is about preventing war. For America to abandon its efforts would increase the danger of a regional conflagration.... Signs indicative of an impending explosion are coming from every side: from Iran, Lebanon, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and also Israel.... The evident weakness of the "world's policeman" is encouraging local leaders to take risks.... Israel is in strategic trouble. Netanyahu's political positions ... are no different from those of his predecessors, Ehud Olmert and Ehud Barak. But the timing of his declarations ... meant to bring him closer to his rightist political base - were viewed internationally as a provocation.... Leaving the regional players to their own devices ... increases the risk of war. Perhaps Obama is blind and does not understand this or perhaps he is simply sick and tired of "the Jews and the Arabs." But there is a third possibility - that he is acting like Henry Kissinger before the Yom Kippur War: waiting for it to begin so that afterward he can summon the wounded parties to America, which will rescue them and impose order in the region."

#### II. "Leadership Avoiding a Meeting"

Chief Economic Editor and senior columnist Sever Plotker wrote in the mass-circulation, pluralist Yediot Aharonot (1/27): "The Palestinian leadership is refusing (so far) to negotiate with the Israeli government headed by Netanyahu. The Palestinians have spoken with all of Israel's governments since the Oslo Accords. But shortly after Netanyahu was sworn in as prime minister for the second time, the Palestinian leadership devised excuses and more excuses to avoid entering into a dialogue with Israel.... (They) do not want to negotiate with Netanyahu because they perceive Netanyahu as a practical statesman who aspires to a practical solution. And this is something in which (they) do not want to become entangled. The Palestinian leaders did not mind talking to Olmert because they knew that he did not have a mandate to reach any agreement.... With Obama and Bibi, the negotiations could evolve differently.... This,

then, is the absurdity of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in 2010. The Palestinians are willing for abstract negotiations with the Netanyahu government, knowing in advance that they will not lead to any result, but are unwilling for practical negotiations if there is a chance that they will lead to results on the ground. They fear to find themselves in a situation where they will be called upon to reject or accept a feasible provisional arrangement, which includes the evacuation of some of the settlements and the transfer of more territory to their control. They are fleeing from Bibi because they view him as a serious statesman."

### III. "Israel's Whitewash"

The independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz editorialized (1/27): "The cabinet's likely approval of an "examination committee" to look into ... Operation Cast Lead ... is yet another grave error in the state's response.... It's a case of too little, too late. After foolishly boycotting the Goldstone committee, ... the government persists in its attempts at a cover-up - entrenching itself further still in its refusal to appoint a state commission of inquiry.... Such a commission is vital. A commission is needed first and foremost in order to conduct an honest, independent examination that will determine, once and for all, whether acts that are defined as war crimes were indeed committed in Operation Cast Lead. Israeli society has the right to know what happened in Gaza.... A committee whose authority will be limited ... can only further damage Israel's shaky position....

The Israeli public has a right to know.... The world will not buy into the conclusions of a co-opted committee with limited powers and its work will not dispel the suspicions hanging over Israel. The prime minister must immediately act to appoint a state commission of inquiry, chaired by a Supreme Court justice, and stop covering up and avoiding a thorough investigation of the truth."

MORENO